

<p><b>TOBA TEK SINGH</b></p> <p>Saadat Hasan Manto is single-handedly spectacular writer for his finest work "Toba Tek Singh". The story portrays about Bishan Singh and some other lunatics who live in the Lahore Mental Asylum. The story starts with two or three years after the Partition. The Government of India and Pakistan decided to exchange their lunatics from one country to other. Muslim lunatics from India would be sent to India. The lunatics were totally confused when they came to know about the decision as they don't know anything about Pakistan. They were unaware of where it was situated and wanted to know whether they were in India or Pakistan. They wondered that if they were in Pakistan how come a little while ago they were in India. One of the lunatics climbed up a tree and decided to live there saying he would go to neither Pakistan nor India. Another lunatic whose name is Mohammed Ali declared himself as Mohammed Ali Jinnah. A Sikh lunatic called himself as Master Tara Singh and another young Hindu lawyer from Lahore did not wish to go to India.</p> <p>Bishan Singh is one among the lunatics of Lahore Asylum; he is the protagonist of this sensational story. He is a harmless old man came to the asylum fifteen years ago when he went mad. Toba Tek Singh is his hometown where he had some land and property. His family members came to visit him once a month, but after the riots broke out they stopped coming. It is later through Fazal Din, a friend and neighbor of Bishan Singh's family we came to know that Bishan Singh's family left for India and were safe there.</p> <p>Finally, the day of exchange came and the lunatics were taken to the Wagha border. The exchange procedure started after the formalities had been done by both sides but it proved to be a very difficult task. The lunatics were out of control, they were screaming, laughing, crying, running here and there making the task all the more complex. After many lunatics Bishan Singh's turn came for the exchange, he asked one officer "where Toba Tek Singh was?". When he learns from the officer that his homeland is in Pakistan he refused to budge. Many officers tried to move him but failed, so they left him for a little while to attend others. After a few seconds all heard a sudden scream from Bishan Singh, who was lying flat face forward on to the ground. And the piece of land where he fell belonged to neither India nor Pakistan.</p> <p><b>ON KILLING A TREE</b></p> <p>In the poem, "On Killing a Tree" by Gieve Patel, the poet talks about the cutting of trees. According to him, it takes a lot of time to kill a tree. It is not just a simple job: a quick stab or blow: to do the job. The tree has grown slowly consuming the earth: eating and drinking from it: rising out of the earth, feeding upon the crust of the earth, absorbing: taking in: innumerable years of sunlight, air, water, out of the trees' leprous hide: resembling the skin of a leper (here) refers to the discolored bark of the tree: the newly formed leaves begin to sprout.</p> <p>A woodcutter may hack: cut or chop with repeated and regular blows: and chop, but still, this alone will not do the job. The tree does not seem to feel any kind of the pain because the bleeding bark seemed to heal all the time. The trunk of the tree from close to the ground will produce curled green twigs that will rise from the miniature bows. If their growth is not checked, then they will expand again and grow to their former sizes. The most important thing to do while killing a tree is to ensure that the root is pulled out of the anchoring: the source of security and stability: earth. The tree is to be rope-tied and pulled out: snapped out: pulled apart or break with a snapping sound: or it should be pulled out entirely from the earth cave.</p> <p>Finally, the strength of the tree will be exposed, from the very source where the white and wet, which is the most sensitive part which has been hidden for many years inside the earth. Then it is only a matter of scorching: burning superficially so as to discolour or damage the texture of and choking: here drying up: in the sun. In the end, the tree will go through a process of browning, hardening, twisting and withering. The ultimately, the tree gets killed</p>	<p><b>THE END OF LIVING THE BEGINNING OF SURVIVAL</b></p> <p>This is an inspiring speech delivered by Chief Seattle, a Native American leader, as a response to a glittering, seducing offer made by the President of the United States to buy their land. He feels and argues that it is impossible to buy or sell natural resources like air, water and land because we do not own them. They are a gift. He says that every part of the earth is sacred to him and his people; they are a part of the earth and the earth is a part of them. Even the souls of the Native Americans do not leave their land. Instead, they make it their permanent residence, unlike in the belief systems of mainstream religions. In short, the earth is not an inanimate tract of land, but a living presence to be treated with love, care, respect and fear. But the worldview of white men is entirely different. For them, it is an object to be tamed, conquered and exploited to the full, until it ceases to be useful. For Native Americans, on the contrary, all natural phenomena are their own siblings. It is true that the President has promised to take care of them like a father. He has also promised to give them a special area where they can continue living with all their rites, rituals and other cultural practices. But still the sale is going to be difficult as he pangs of parting with such a dear and sacred place are excruciating. The Chief suggests some conditions. If at all the transaction takes place, white men should remember that the land is sacred and inviolable. They should also teach their children the same. The Chief wants white men to treat rivers and beasts as their own brothers, not to be seen through a utilitarian perspective. They have seen white men pollute rivers and shoot animals for the sake of fun. The reality is that every object in the nature is connected with each other. Whatever happens to animals and land will happen to us sooner or later. No one can escape this fate. The earth does not belong to us but we belong to the earth and all are bonded like family members. For his people the din, frenzy and chaos of modern cities are a painful sight. For the simple pleasures of nature are more precious and more important than anything else. They treat rain, wind and land as living organisms just like humans. Unfortunately the white man has neither the sense nor the sensibility to feel the pulse of nature. Chief Seattle ironically and sarcastically adds that perhaps the problem is with himself and his people—they are uneducated, uncultured and uncivilized! The holistic vision of the speech is reiterated at the end within a theological framework. There is only one God and He does not discriminate between peoples. White or red, human beings are equal in His eyes. The earth is precious to Him and to harm the earth is to heap contempt on the creator. The destiny is a mystery to the Native Americans too, but they do realize that the changed environment marks the end of living and the beginning of survival.</p> <p><b>AMINESTY</b></p> <p>A young woman narrates the story of her potential husband's freedom from imprisonment. The man, never named, had led their village on the grassy plains of S. Africa 9 years earlier to work as a construction worker among the unfinished tops of skyscrapers in an obscure but not too distant city. The woman had little contact with his urban life (for 2 years he sent home money and visited one weekend each month) but she learned he had joined a union. A bright man, he began making speeches and marching for workers and, it seems, civil rights in general. In the third year, she learned that he was in prison. During the trial that followed a baby daughter, which he named Inkululeko, was born. He was sentenced to 6 years on the isolated "island." She attempted to visit him once: she and his parents saved for 2 years and made the journey to Cape Town, but they got as far as the ferry because they had no permit. After 5 years, he has returned, changed. His young daughter doesn't recognize him from the old photo she has grown up with; the narrator finds herself as distanced from this man may be less sure of where his thoughts are, as when he was away from her. Now, carrying a second child, she finishes the story, thinking figuratively that she's still waiting for him to come home, and she realizes she's waiting to go back herself. And she's still not married.</p>	<p><b>THE OUTCASTE</b></p> <p>The caste of an individual determines everything about his life, including the clothes he will wear, the person he will marry, and the food he will eat. Sharankumar Limbale chronicles about the horrendous life of a man who suffered the pain of not even being allowed into the caste system. He was an outcaste, below everyone else.</p> <p>"Akkarmashi", a landmark in Marathi Dalit literature, was first compiled by Sharankumar Limbale in the Mahar dialect of Maharashtra in 1984. Through his words, he portrayed the miserable life he lived as an untouchable, as a half-caste, and as an impoverished man. This work was translated into English by Santosh Bhoomkar in 2003.</p> <p>"The Outcaste" is about an untouchable family in general and community struggles in particular. It reflects then conditions of a particular oppressed class, namely the Mahar community about half a century back and at the same time gives a true and realistic picture of the darker side of the Indian society.</p> <p>He composed a personal descriptive style in his autobiography to show the life experiences of a Dalit, which includes inequality, discrimination and indifference towards them and their culture. The author elaborates his pathetic situation of not having an identity, a home or place of belonging. Limbale was born as an illegal son of a high caste Patil and a poor, landless, untouchable mother. As a result, Limbale neither belongs to the Mahar community nor the Marata caste; he is an Akkarmashi, i.e. an outcaste. His mother lived in a hut, and his father in a mansion. Hence, the son was branded illegitimate. Due to this reason, he could not get certain papers signed for school and the school authority would not accept his grandmother as his guardian because she lived with a Muslim and for obvious reason, they could not accept his last name since it belonged to a higher caste. When it was time for marriage, he could not even get married to a low caste girl because his blood was not "pure"; he was not wanted anywhere. Eventually, a drunkard who had offered Limbale his daughter would not allow her to leave after the wedding because of Limbale's background. Due to his fractured identity, the narrator suffered his entire life.</p> <p>However, because of his incredible strength and bravery, he did not allow these socially constructed walls to stop him from getting an education and eventually publishing his story. Dalits lived in huts outside the Village (this depicts their status in the society). They spent most of the time inside the bus stand. Regarding the House, Sharankumarsaid: "To us, the bus stand was like home.... we lay like discarded bus tickets". They totally depended on uppercaste people. They ate leftover food, did subordinate work and wore clothes discarded by upper-caste society. It is said that for filling stomachs men become thieves and women become whores. However, due to the pathetic life situations, Limbale goes to the extent of saying that God had made a mistake by giving stomachs to the Dalits. The condition of the untouchable is such that they steal, beg, sort grain from dung, fetch dead animals and eat them, in order to appease their hunger.</p> <p>In the caste hierarchy, Brahmins were the superior once, then the Kshatriyas and then the Vyshyas and the Shudras. The fifth, which was not even considered as part of the caste system, was Dalits, which were often referred to us the "polluting" caste. The cruelty reached its height when the Dalits were imposed with murder, rape, and many more such allegations. Influenced by people like Shahu, Phule, Gandhiji and Ambedkar, Dalit writers started emphasizing their existing issues. Following the path of these legends, Dalit writers began writing, focusing on themes such as cruelty on Dalits, demand of social equality, justice, and social and economic democracy. The teachings of Dr. Ambedkar woke up the Dalits. Ambedkar himself was a Dalit, born in the Mahar community who went on to become a social activist, a legal expert and a nationally respected leader of Dalits in India. The newfound political independence also helped a lot in improving the living conditions of the untouchables. During this period, Dalits began to refuse to do the lowly jobs that they once did for the uppercaste. They also started demanding equality, which was unacceptable to the upper castes.</p>	<p><b>WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE TRANSGENDER</b></p> <p>The narrator was kneeling long after the congregation on his feet, by dipping both hands into holy water and he traced the trinity crossed his chest and uttered prayer for the first time in a glass-stained cathedral. His tiny body drooping like a question mark and asked Jesus to fix it, but didn't get answer. He befriended silence in the hopes that his sin would burn and save his mouth dissolved like sugar on tongue, but shame lingered as an aftertaste. To reintroduce him to sanctity, his mother told him that he was the miracle and told he could choose to be anything he wants when he grow up. So he decided to be a boy. It was cute and used skinned knees as was the custom and played hide and seek with his goal.</p> <p>He won the game which other kids couldn't play, he was the mystery of an anatomy, because he was neither fully a boy nor a girl - a question asked but not answered. So he tried to balance between awkward boy and apologetic girl, and when he turned 12, the boy phase wasn't deemed cute anymore. So he wore skirts because his nostalgic aunts reminded that if he went on with boys kind of attitude he would never bring a husband home. He swallowed their insults along with their slurs. Naturally the narrator refused to reveal his secret, but the kids in his school found some truth and called him lesbian. He was more boy than girl, more Ken than Barbie. He did not hate his body he just loved it enough to let it go, because the body is considered a house and did not want to evacuate. His mother fears he would fade away like Mya Hall, Leelah Alcorn, Blake Brockington - who either committed suicide or were shot dead. And people will speak of him as "what a shame!" the mother claims that then he would turned into walking coffin and all news headlines would turn his identity into a spectacle. People like him are left out when the societies discuss about equality of gender, as he belongs to neither group.</p> <p>No one ever thinks of them as human because they are more ghost than flesh, people fear that their gender expression is a trick, that it exists to be perverse, that it ensnares them without their consent. His body is a feast for their eyes and hands and once they have fed off his queer, they'll regurgitate all the parts they did not like. Then they'll put him back into the closet, hang him with all the other skeletons and he will be the best attraction.</p> <p>He wonders how long it will be before the trans suicide notes start to feel redundant. They are transgender not because of their sin and so should love their body. He prayed long for the answer but did not receive and his blood is not the wine that washed over Jesus' feet. His prayers are now getting stuck in his throat. Maybe he feels finally he had fixed, because he understands that that is how God wants him, so he don't care anymore. He accept whatever God has decided and don't have any complaint.</p>
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